1; Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AVI Kashmir
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CHAPTER XX.

DÁRDISTÁN: COUNTRIES AROUND GILGIT.

FRAGMENTS of information got from hearsay of countries that are inaccessible to one, when they can be verified by comparison, are not without value. I will therefore put down a few notes, which, as far as they go, are likely to be correct, on those parts of Dárdistán which cannot at present be reached by Europeans.

But first I will show, in a tabular form, the several divisions of Dárdistán which have in any way come within my notice, including those which have already been treated of. These divisions are in some cases separate valleys, in other cases parts of the same valley. The Table includes a statement of their form of government, of the races or castes that inhabit them, and of the sect or religion prevailing, as well as the practice that may hold as regards slavery.

DÁRDISTÁN.

	Government.	Prevailing Races or Castes.	Religion.	Conditions as regards Slavery.
GILGIT ..	Governed directly by the Maharaja's officers.	A few Ronú; more Shin; most Yashkun.	Half Sunní, half Shia.	In these valleys there now, nor was there of old, either slavery or slave-trade.
SAZ		Shin and Yashkun	Mostly Sunní; a few Shia.	
HARANGOSH		Shin and Yashkun	Shia.	
HASORA ..		Shin and Yashkun	Sunní.	
PUNIAL ..	Ruled by Raja Tahsildar, in dependence on the Maharaja. (Raja's caste or family is called Burshe.)	Yashkun	Mostly Sunní; and a few Sunní.	
NAGAR ..	Ruled by Raja Zafar. (Raja's family, Mogulate.)	Yashkun	All Shia.	

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Divisions—continued.

	Government.	Prevailing Name or Clans.	Religion.	Conditions as regards Slavery.
Hunza ..	Ruled by Raja Ghazan Khan, son of Ghazanfar. (Raja's family, Ayashin.)	Yashkun	All Maliki.	
Ishkuman, or Chatarkun	Belongs to Yasin	Yashkun	Maliki.	
Yasin ..	Ruled by Raja Mir Wali, son of Gaur Rahmat. (Raja's family, Dakhin.)	Yashkun	Maliki and Sunni, the former predominating in Yasin.	Here slaves are both kept and dealt in.
Gurezh and Mastuj.	Ruled by Raja Inder-ul-Mulk. (Raja's family, Kator.)	Yashkun	Sunni.	
Gokiya, in Ramakmalik	Dependent on the Mir or Prince of Badakhshan (tributary to Kabul).	Wakhi*	Maliki.	
Diran ..	Republic	Shin and Yashkun	Sunni.	In these republics of war are kept as slaves; slave-dealing is not practised.
Tangir ..	Republic	Shin and Yashkun		
Gor	Republic	Shin and Yashkun	Sunni.	
Thalicha ..	Republic.			
Cunjut ..	Republic	Shin and Yashkun		
Kuni	Republic	Shin and Yashkun		
Pakor ..	Republic	Shin and Yashkun		

The first five divisions I have already treated of as fully as I was able. We now come to the countries that surround Gilgit.

Nagar lies along the left bank of the Hunza-Nagar River, having Hunza opposite on the right bank. Since about 1867 it has paid a small tribute to the Maharaja, receiving in return a present of larger value; this cannot be considered more than a compliment, and a mark of desire for friendly relations.

The people of Nagar are called Khajunt.

Hunza is a more warlike country than Nagar. As shown in the last chapter, it has often been actively at enmity with the Maharaja, and it has generally been in a state of unfriendliness to him. In 1870 the Hunza Raja sent an agent to Sirinagar to open friendly relations, who was well received; I do not know

* I have never met any of these people, but I believe them to be Dards. Gojje is another name by which they are called; that is the territorial name, while Wakhik is the caste name.

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each is free to pursue its own without severing the federal bond. Thus I have heard that some villages have joined with one power—have agreed to pay tribute—while others of the same valley have done the same to the rival power. But there must be some limit to this. They could not, of course, actively join on opposite sides.

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My knowledge of the working of these institutions is very incomplete; on the whole I incline to think that with the republics there is less of wars of ambition than with those valleys that are governed by an hereditary ruler, less of bloodshed on a large scale, such as is brought about by or for the dispossession of dynasties. But I do not think that the internal state is so secure and quiet as under a Raja; in the republics personal independence and liberty of action are so much the rule, that no one interferes to prevent even violence.

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In the Table given at p. 456, the last column shows the custom of the various states with respect to slavery. There are three categories. The first includes Gilgit, Astor, Nagar, &c.; in these places not only is slavery unknown now that some of them are under the rule of the Maharaja of Kashmir, but, according to my information, it was not the custom before.

Another category includes the Republics; in these, slaves when captured in a foray are kept as servants, as we saw was the case in Chilás with those they brought away from Astor; but they are not used as a commodity to be bought and sold.

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Thirdly, in the Rajaships of Hunza, Yásin, and Chitrál, slaves are openly bought and sold; the Rajas themselves are the chief dealers—that is to say, they are sellers—while merchants, generally from Badakhshán, are the buyers. The greater expense of sustaining these governments, as compared with the republics, has probably been the cause of the Rajas entering on this trade, in which they will sell, in default of others, their own subjects even. Many are the people, and of races various—Dárd and Dográ, Panjábi and Pathán—whom the fortune of war has allowed to fall into the hands of one or other of these rulers, and who, having been bartered by their avaricious captor, are passing their lives as exiles and slaves in Badakhshán or in Turkistán.

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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for centuries persistent rivals, always at war with each other, but always ready to unite against a common invader, even when that invader had been called in by the one State in order to assist it in coercing the other.

The State of Hunza was the most important of the two, from the fact that its possession of the passes leading to the Pamirs, and to the valley of the Yarkand river, gave it the opportunity, in the picturesque Persian phrase, of "striking the road," and looting the caravans on their way between Turkestan and India. The rulers of Hunza availed themselves of this commanding position freely; their name was a terror to the merchant and to the gentle Kirghiz, and their success was such that certain roads were entirely abandoned by traders; tracts of country north of the passes were completely depopulated, and Hunza was the centre of the slave trade, the place to which the merchants of Badakshan regularly came to replenish their stocks. The rulers of Hunza were rich compared to those of Nagar, and secure in the fastnesses of their mountains they snapped their fingers at China and Kashmir, and with fine impartiality plundered caravans to the north and kidnapped slaves to the south. But brigands by profession as the people were, they appear to have acted always on the orders of their chief, and the admirable cultivation of their ground, the immense and persistent labour spent on their irrigation channels, and on the retaining walls of their terraced fields, showed that they were worthy of better things. The country itself is some hundred miles in length: from Chalt to Hunza, a distance of about twenty-five miles

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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nearly as lax in their Mahomedanism as the people of Hunza. There is considerably more cultivation than in Hunza, the land is better watered, and the main slopes of the mountains enclosing the country face north, and are consequently covered with forest. The land has the full benefit of the summer sun, and the crops are splendid. The untold profusion of the apricots, and the quantity of gold which can be washed out of every stream, has gained the country amongst the Nagaris themselves the name of "the land of gold and apricots." The people, though of identically the same stock as those of Hunza, show marked differences. They are less warlike than their neighbours; they were never implicated in the raiding of caravans, owing principally perhaps to there being no outlet to the north or east leading to caravan tracks; they are, on the whole, better off, owing to the better agricultural conditions, and the possession of splendid grazing grounds; and last, but not least, slavery is unknown amongst them — that is, they would not brook their king selling them or their children, and the exile of the present ruler's eldest son is said to have been caused by his attempt to introduce the custom from Hunza. The men are not so bright and cheery as their Hunza cousins; they strike one as more sedate and morose, and their reputation for dash and gallantry is far lower. The reason they themselves assign for the difference, and the one generally accepted, is that in the winter, when the sun is in the south, the great mountains backing their valley shut out all the light and warmth, of which Hunza facing south enjoys the full benefit, and that the depressing effect of passing day after day in the cold and dark-

1: Leitner L-3 (1868-83) 1893? AVS Dard
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133 are very steep, involving at times springing from one ledge of a rock to another, or dropping on to it from a height of six feet, when, if the footing is lost, the wild torrent sweeps
181 one away. Colonel Biddulph does not credit the Nagyris with bravery. History, however, does not bear out his statement; and the defeat inflicted on the Kashmir troops under Nathu Shah in 1848 is a lesson even for the arrogance of a civilized invader armed with the latest rifle.
[533] The Nagyris are certainly not without culture; in music they were proficient before the Muhammadan piety of the Shiah sect somewhat tabooed the art. At all events, they are different in character from the Hunzas with whom they share the same language, and their chiefs the same ancestry.
72 The Hunzas, in whom a remnant of the Huns may be
● 547 found, were great kidnappers; but under Kashmir influence they stopped raiding since 1869, till the confusion incidental to our interference revived their gone occupation. Indeed, it is asserted on good authority, that even our ally of Chitrál, who had somewhat abandoned the practice of selling his Shiah or Kalásha Kafir subjects into slavery, and who had so disposed of the miners for not working his ruby mines to profit, has now returned to the trade in men, "with the aid of our present of rifles and our moral support." Nor is Bokhara said to be behind Chitrál in the revival of the slave-trade from Darwáz, in spite of Russian influence; so that we have the remarkable instance of two great Powers both opposed to slavery and the slave-trade, having revived it in their approach to one another. Nor is a third Power, quite blameless in the matter; for when we worried Hunza, that robber-nest remembered its old allegiance to distant Kitái and arranged with the Chinese authorities at Yarkand to be informed of the departure of a caravan. Then, after intercepting it on the Kulanuldi road, the Hunzas would take those they kidnapped from it back for sale to Yarkand!

000 As a matter of fact, we have now a scramble for the regions surrounding and extending into the Pamirs by

1: Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard
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loss of their independence,—I venture to point out the impolicy and injustice of interfering with these principalities.

I have already referred to a letter from the venerable chief of Nagyr, in which he strongly commends to my care one of his sons, Raja Habibulla, as a well-wisher of the English Government. Indeed, he has absolutely done nothing to justify any attack on the integrity of his country; and before we invade it other means to secure peace should be tried. I have no doubt that I, for one, could induce him to comply with everything in reason, if reason, and not an excuse for taking his country, is desired. Nagyr has never joined Hunza in kidnapping expeditions, as is alleged in the above-quoted paragraph. Indeed, slavery is an abomination to the pious and peaceful agriculturist of that interesting country. The Nagyris are musical and were fond of dances, polo, ibex *battue*-hunting, archery and shooting from horseback, and other manly exercises; but the growing piety of the race has latterly proscribed music and dancing. The accompanying drawing of a Nagyri dance in the neighbouring Gilgit gives a good idea of similar performances at Nagyr.

The country is full of legendary lore, but less so than Hunza, where Grimm's fairy tales appear to be translated into actual life. No war is undertaken except at the supposed command of an unseen fairy, whose drum is on such occasions sounded in the mountains. Ecstatic women, inhaling the smoke of a cedar-branch, announce the future, tell the past, and describe the state of things in neighbouring valleys. They are thus alike the prophets, the historians, and the journalists of the tribe. They probably now tell their indignant hearers how, under the pretext of shooting or of commerce, Europeans have visited their country, which they now threaten to destroy with strange and murderous weapons; but Hunza is "ayeshó," or "heaven-born," and the fairies, if not the inaccessible nature of the country, will continue to protect it.

The folly of invading Hunza and Nagyr is even greater